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## THE AMERICAN COUNCIL OF LEARNED SOCIETIES

International co-operation in the fields of the humanistic sciences, with the United States forced to abstain from participation because of the lack of a central academy of such sciences—such was the situation in existence until the formation of the American Council of Learned Societies in September, 1919. In 1900 at Paris there had been established the International Association of Academies, including both humanistic and strictly scientific branches. Here America was represented by the National Academy of Sciences, but this unfortunately was not at all concerned with the studies of such subjects as sociology, history, political science, economics, and philosophy. Great Britain also was represented only in the field of the physical sciences through the Royal Society. But this lack was made up in 1902 by the formation of the British Academy for the Promotion of Historical, Philosophical, and Philological Studies. No such society was established in America.

The war broke up this International Association, but in 1918 it was re-established in so far as the physical sciences were concerned by the formation of the International Research Council. Later a conference resulted in the formation of the International Union of Academies (*Union Académique Internationale*) for the furthering of the humanistic studies. M. Émile Senart of the Academy of Inscriptions and Belles Lettres was chosen first president, and the regular place of meeting for the society is to be the Palais des Académies at Brussels. In the first of these two organizations America as before was represented, but in the second it could not be.

Many scholars, both here and abroad, rightly considered this isolation of the American humanistic societies from their foreign contemporaries to be unfortunate. Chiefly through the efforts of Waldo G. Leland, secretary of the American Historical Association, a conference was therefore called in September, 1919, to which thirteen of the societies of the proper type were invited and

which was attended by representatives of ten. A constitution was drawn up establishing an "American Council of Learned Societies devoted to Humanistic Studies" to consist of two delegates from each of the member societies. Eleven of the eligible societies have already voted to join the Council.

The first meeting of the new council was held on February 14, 1920, in New York and eleven societies were represented. The American Sociological Society was represented by its president, James Q. Dealey, of Brown University. Officers were elected and also two delegates were chosen to represent the United States at the May meeting of the International Association. The chairman of the Council elected at this meeting was Professor Charles H. Haskins, of Harvard University, a representative of the American Historical Association, and Professor George M. Whicher, of Hunter College, was chosen secretary.

American humanistic societies represented at this meeting were the American Sociological Society, the American Philosophical Society, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the American Antiquarian Society, the American Philological Association, the Archaeological Institute of America, the American Historical Association, the American Economic Association, the American Political Science Association, the American Oriental Society, and the Modern Language Association of America.

With a total membership in its constituent societies of over ten thousand it is evident that the American Council will prove to be a real force for the promotion of learning in this country. If in no other way, it will perform some good at any rate in that it will bring into some sort of unity a dozen or more societies, so naturally akin in interests and yet heretofore completely separated in organization. There is also America's share in international humanistic tasks to be considered.

There have been cases in which action by members of one nation by themselves meant that scholars of other nations were hindered in their attempts to perform similar or supplementary work. Such discrimination will in the future be tabooed by the International Union. Also the Union should prove advantageous in that it may provide a means for standardizing publications of a

national sort but of international interest, and in a uniform manner collecting in the different countries that material for some international work which is found in those particular countries.

So far the International Union of Academies or the U.A.I., as it is often called, includes representatives of the following countries besides the United States: France, Great Britain, Belgium, the Netherlands, Norway, Denmark, Italy, Greece, Poland, Russia, and Japan. Representatives of Spain, Roumania, Portugal, Finland, and Czecho-Slovakia are expected to join soon.